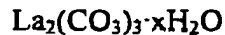


**A M E N D M E N T**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Amended) A pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of hyperphosphataemia comprising lanthanum carbonate of the formula



where x has a value from 3 to 6, in admixture [or association] with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier in a form for administration to the gastrointestinal tract.

2. (Amended) A composition according to claim 1, wherein [in the lanthanum carbonate,] x has a value from 3.5 to 5.

3. (Amended) A composition according to claim 2, wherein [in the lanthanum carbonate,] x has a value from 3.8 to 4.5.

Please cancel claim 4.

Please cancel claim 6.

7. (Amended) A process for the preparation of lanthanum carbonate as defined in any one of claims 1 to 3 which comprises the steps of:

(i) reacting lanthanum oxide with hydrochloric acid to obtain lanthanum chloride;

(ii) reacting a solution of the thus obtained lanthanum chloride with an alkali metal carbonate to produce a wet cake of lanthanum carbonate octahydrate; and

(iii) [controlled] drying [of] the wet cake of lanthanum carbonate octahydrate so as to obtain a lanthanum carbonate with 3 to 6 molecules of water of crystallisation.

Please cancel claim 9.

Please add the following claims.